



BNSF Railway Co. – Former Tie Treating Plant Somers, Montana

1098150 - R8 SDMS



Interim Groundwater Treatment System Shutdown

October 2007

EPA and DEQ propose a temporary shut-down of the Groundwater Treatment System (GWTS) for a period of two years to study groundwater contaminant stability. During this period, groundwater will be sampled quarterly. If no significant contaminant migration is observed, EPA and DEQ will complete the evaluation of the request to decommission the GWTS.

Groundwater Treatment System (GWTS) Shut-Down Request

BNSF requested terminating operation of the GWTS in September 2004. The request was based on modeling data showing that discontinuation of the GWTS will not impact the migration of contaminants in the groundwater. BNSF will monitor groundwater to confirm that the contaminant plume is stable and will not migrate offsite.

Join EPA, DEQ and BNSF on October 11, 2007
at Lakeside Elementary School
at 225 Adams St.
from 7:00 – 8:30 pm
to discuss the plan to temporarily shut down
the groundwater treatment system.



Somers Groundwater Treatment System

Facility History

BNSF operated a railroad tie treating plant in Somers from 1901 until the plant's closure in 1986. Several years of environmental investigations showed that soil and groundwater within the lagoon and a portion of the swamp pond contained elements of creosote.

EPA issued a Record of Decision for the Somers site in 1989, specifying soil and groundwater cleanup actions. In 1992 BNSF built the GWTS and a 14.4 acre land treatment unit (LTU) to clean up the soil. Soil treated in the LTU was cleaned up by 2002. The GWTS has operated since 1993.

In May 1998 BNSF submitted a Phase II Groundwater Remedy Remedial Design document to EPA. This document presented data from three years of operation showing that it would not be technically feasible to meet cleanup levels due to characteristics of the site geology, hydrogeology, and contaminants.

Based on these site conditions, BNSF proposed in 2003 that Phase II efforts rely on implementing institutional controls to prohibit activities that negatively impact the plume, to protect Flathead Lake and to limit human exposure to contaminants.



EPA and DEQ required groundwater use restrictions as an Institutional Control for the site. A Controlled Groundwater Area was established by the Department of Natural Resource Conservation in 2003.

If two years of monitoring show no significant migration of contaminants while the GWTS is shut off, EPA and DEQ will complete the evaluation of the request to decommission the GWTS. Institutional Controls will prohibit activities that negatively impact the plume and a long-term groundwater monitoring program will evaluate continuing protectiveness of human health and the environment.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

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UPCOMING COMMUNITY MEETING

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Montana Department of Environmental Quality will hold a public information meeting in Somers at Lakeside Elementary School on Thursday, October 11, 2007. Join us from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm to learn more about the environmental investigations and treatment system and future plans at the Somers site.

INFORMATION REPOSITORIES

Flathead County Library; 2471st Ave.; East Kalispell, Montana

EPA Superfund Records Center; 10 West 15th Street; Suite-3200; Helena, Montana